

Western Wake Freeway

Project Chronology

Years of Planning	
1968	The Raleigh Outer Loop was first identified in the Greater Raleigh Thoroughfare Plan as a future need.
1984	A general alignment for the Outer Loop was included in the 1984 Greater Raleigh Thoroughfare Plan Update.
1990-1992	NCDOT evaluated several corridor alignments for corridor preservation, based on environmental screening and cursory engineering data.
May 13, 1993	A public hearing was held to obtain citizen comments on the corridors considered for preservation under the Roadway Corridor Official Maps Act (G.S. 136-44.52).
August 6, 1993	The Board of Transportation adopted the corridor pursuant to the Roadway Corridor Official Maps Act.
May 21, 1996	A scoping letter was distributed to local governments within the project area and state and federal resource agencies, soliciting their comments for the environmental impact statement (EIS).
June 7, 1996	A formal Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for the Western Wake Freeway (WWF) was published in the Federal Register (Volume 61, Number 111).
June 17, 1996	The first Steering Committee meeting was held concurrently with the project scoping meeting at the Transportation Building in Raleigh. NCDOT representatives explained the project history, status, and the environmental study process. The study area was illustrated on mapping which identified environmental and land development data collected prior to the meeting. Comments were received from the various agencies in attendance concerning environmental issues and resources within the study area. Requests were made by agency representatives to avoid impacts to gamelands and wetlands.
July 19, 1996	The first project newsletter was distributed. It provided information about the EIS process and notification of the first citizens informational workshop. The newsletter also discussed the previously preserved corridor and provided a map illustrating its location within the project study area.
August 6, 1996	A public officials meeting and the first citizens informational workshop were held from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Carey C. Jones Building in Apex. Approximately 200 citizens attended the workshop. Information about the project and the EIS process was distributed via a handout and a computer presentation. Land Suitability Maps were displayed at the meeting, which illustrated all known planned development, historic properties and districts, wetlands, hydric soils, hazardous materials sites, and other information. The preserved corridor was also illustrated at the workshop.
September 30, 1996	The second Steering Committee meeting was held to review and select the detailed study corridors. Five alternatives were presented to the Steering Committee. Of these alternatives, the Steering Committee selected three to be evaluated in the EIS.
March 10, 1997	The second newsletter was distributed to announce the date of the second citizens informational workshop and provide an update on the project's progress. Specifically, it announced that the three detailed study alternatives were selected by the project steering committee, and provided a map illustrating the alternative corridors.
March 19, 1997	A public officials meeting and the second citizens informational workshop were held from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Carey C. Jones Building in Apex. Approximately 140 citizens attended the workshop to review the three study alternatives for the proposed freeway. Maps were displayed which illustrated the location of each corridor. A handout was provided that discussed the project's purpose and need, traffic forecasts, and alternative evaluation factors.
October 19, 1999	NCDOT received Federal Highway Administration approval of the DEIS.
December 2, 1999	The DEIS was distributed to local governments and federal and state resource agencies for comments.
June 27, 2000	A Pre-Hearing Open House was held from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. followed by a Corridor Public Hearing from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the Carey C. Jones Building in Apex, North Carolina. Approximately 300 people attended the hearing. Nearly all who commented expressed opposition to Alternative C.
August 2, 2000	The Interagency Field Review Meeting
August 10, 2000	The NEPA/404 Merger Team meeting was held to review the alternatives under consideration with regulatory agencies.
August 18, 2000	The NCDOT post-hearing meeting was held to review comments from the public and the regulatory agencies. Later that day, NCDOT's Selection Committee met and selected Alternative A as the Preferred Alternative, pending endorsement by the NEPA/404 Merger Team.

September 7, 2000	NCDOT announced the selection of Alternative A as the Preferred Alternative corridor, based on the findings of the draft EIS, comments received at the public hearing, endorsement by the interagency advisory committee, and the NEPA/404 Merger Team.
January 2004	The Final Environmental Impact Statement was signed by NCDOT and FHWA.
April 30, 2004	FHWA approved the Record of Decision.
May 28, 2004	Record of Decision was published in the North Carolina Bulletin.
March 22, 2005	The Design Public Hearing was held.
December 2005	The Mayors of five southern and western wake county towns requested the North Carolina Turnpike Authority to evaluate the feasibility of constructing the I-540 Western Wake as a toll road.
February 2006	The North Carolina Turnpike Authority initiated a traffic and revenue study to evaluate the financial feasibility of tolling I-540 Western and Southern Wake from NC 55 at Morrisville to I-40 south of Garner.